FASTING

- & ITS RULINGS -

By Shaikh Abu Haatim
Usaamah Ibn ‘Abdil-Lateef Al-Qoosee

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&

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FOREWORD

Verily all praise is due to Allaah, we praise Him, we seek His assistance and we ask for His forgiveness. And we seek refuge in Allaah from the evils of our selves and the evils of our actions. Whoever Allaah guides none can lead him astray and whoever is led astray, none can guide Him. I testify that there is no god that has the right to be worshipped except Allaah, alone and with no partner. And I testify that Muhammad is His slave and final messenger.

To Proceed:

The book before you is a translation of a small pocket-size booklet written by Shaikh Usaamah Al-Qoosee, which was given the title ***"As-Siyaam wa Ahkaamuhu"*** (Fasting and Its Rulings). We embarked on the project of translating, formatting and printing this book in the English Language for the month of Ramadaan (December 2000). Two thousand copies of this book were printed by the second week of Ramadaan and over a thousand were distributed for free. A portion of the remaining books were sold to some local bookstores to raise funds, while a few remaining copies stayed with us for our records. During that same month of Ramadaan, we made this book available over the Internet as a free downloadable book in PDF (Acrobat) format. By the Grace of Allaah, many Muslims downloaded the book and benefited from it greatly.

We have taken the original book and reformatted it so that it can be better viewed over the Internet as well as from its downloaded file. Some of the changes we made were replacing certain fonts for others, adding headings for each section, dividing sections up into their own pages, and providing a Table of Contents that links to each section chosen. We have also added the author's autobiography to add to the benefits of this book. Lastly, as with all of our e-books, we provided front and back covers, so that our readers may assemble their books at their own convenience and store it in their libraries along with their other Islaamic books.

Lastly, we hope that this book serves as a source of benefit for the Muslim ummah and that it is a cause for them to be guided to the truth and to the way of worshipping Allaah correctly. We also ask Allaah that He place this noble work on the scale of good deeds of all those who were involved in its production and distribution. We hope that everyone that reads this can pass it on to their Muslim brothers and sisters, whether by printing them a copy or giving them the book file, so that they too can partake in the benefit.

Written by:
Isma'eel Alarcon
For The Salafi Society of North America
On April 9, 2001

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF SHAIKH USAAMAH AL-QOOSEE

My Name and Lineage:
Usaamah Ibn 'Abd-il-Lateef Ibn Mahmood Al-Qoosee Al-Hajaajee

My Family Lineage:
It traces back to Abul-Hajaaj Al-Aqsaree, whose name was Yusuf Ibn 'Abd-ir-Raheem Ibn Ghazee Al-Qurshee.[1] May Allaah free him of the polytheistic and innovatory practices that occur at his gravesite.

My Birth:
I was born in the morning of the Day of 'Arafah in 1373H (7/8/1954) in Cairo, Egypt.

My Upbringing:
I was born in Egypt, in the Muski area in Shiyaadah Al-Munaasarah[2] behind Daar Al-Kutub.[3] And I was brought up in the house of my mother's father for the period of a year. Then my father moved to a residence in the Hadaa'iq Al-Qubbah area. This is where I grew up and spent the length of my youth, adolescence and early adulthood. During this time, I pursued my general grade-levels studies in the Nuqraashi School, which have the pattern of primary level (6 years), then secondary level (3 years), and then high school level (3 years). Thereafter, I obtained entrance into a college for medicine in the University of 'Ain Shams, where I remained for five years studying medicine. During this period in time, I learned Tajweed from some of my colleagues at school, and I memorized what I was able to of the Qur'aan. The Correct Path of Islaam was not wholly clear to me at that time due to the large amount of Hizbees (partisans), activists, Takfeerees, Sufis and so on that were around me. Then I received the opportunity to make 'Umrah along with my classmates on a college trip, during the month of Ramadaan in 1397H (1977 CE). So this served as the start of my search for knowledge and my being guided to the path of the Salaf As-Saalih.

My Search for Knowledge:
In Makkah, I met some students of knowledge from Saudi Arabia and other parts of the world. In turn, they introduced me to some of the scholars and mashaayikh, and I began to understand that there was something called *talab-ul-'ilm* (Seeking Knowledge). So I attended some classes in the Haram at Makkah, taught by Shaikh Badee'-ud-Deen Ar-Raashidee As-Sindee, the Muhaddith of the land of Sind, may Allaah have mercy on him. I also visited his house and his library, which was filled with remarkable books and non-printed manuscripts. After Ramadaan, I moved to the city of Madeenah and there I met Shaikh Abee 'Abd-ir-Rahmaan Muqbil Ibn Haadee Al-Waadi'ee, may Allaah preserve him, the Muhaddith of the lands of Yemen. At that time, he was studying in the advanced-levels section in the Islaamic University of Madeenah. And he was

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[1] This is how Adh-Dhahabee mentioned it in his book *Siyar A'alaam An-Nubalaa* (pg. 23-148) and he described him as being the "Big One", the "Zaahid."
[2] This is an area within the Muski location.
[3] This is a famous landmark in Egypt, where people used to sell books, hence its name *Daar Al-Kutub* (Place of the Books). Now it is mostly reserved for administrative offices.

very close to finishing his treatise on the two books "*Al-Ilzaamaat*" and "*At-Tatabbu'*" of Imaam Ad-Daaraqutnee, may Allaah have mercy on him. I began to attend his classes on the book *Jaami' At-Tirmidhee*, but it was as if I was hearing mysterious words and riddles!

Then I traveled to Qaseem and there I met the Shaikh, the Haafidh, the Muhaddith of the lands of Najd, 'Abdullaah Ad-Duwaish, may Allaah have mercy on him. And I attended some of his gatherings in his home in the city of Buraidah. I was amazed by his abstinence (of this world) his humbleness, his diligence, his striving and his patience with seeking and acquiring knowledge (by reading and studying). This was such that he almost lost his eyesight (because of his studies) while in the prime of his youth, and it was to the extent that when I saw him I imagined he was much older than me, whereas he was my same age. At that time, he was memorizing the Six Books (of the Sunnah) [4] ***completely*** with their chains of narration and their texts. And he was at the point of completing his memorization of the Musnad of Imaam Ahmad. And at the same time, he was studying Imaam Muslim's introduction to his Saheeh. Meanwhile, I was amazed and overcome at what I saw and heard. I could not get myself to believe that such a person existed in our world. After this, I returned to Madeenah and Makkah and there I would frequent the classes of our Shaikh, Shaikh Muqbil at his house in Madeenah time after time.

During the time I spent in Saudi Arabia, I resolved on making two decisions, of which only one of them came through. The first was to abandon continuing my studies in the field of medicine and to instead preoccupy myself with studying the Islaamic sciences. And the second was to stay permanently in Madeenah, the city of Allaah's Messenger, but this did not come through. So I returned to Egypt in 1398H (1978 CE) because Saudi Arabia did not grant me the *iqaamah* (residential status) to remain there. Nevertheless, I did not go back on my other resolution to study the Islaamic sciences, especially since I had gotten a taste of its sweetness during that year.

I also forgot to mention that while making Hajj that year, Allaah enabled me to meet the Shaikh, the Imaam, the Muhaddith of the lands of Shaam, rather the Muhaddith of the whole world, Muhammad Naasir-ud-Deen Al-Albaanee, may Allaah have mercy on him, several times in both Makkah and Madeenah. This included one time in which I saw him face to face at the place where he was staying in Madeenah. This was during the month of Thul-Hijjah, 1397AH. I had seen him before about a year or two ago - I don't recall now - when the Shaikh came to Egypt for purposes of giving Da'wah, due to which he gave a number of lectures. However, I was far away from him, sitting in the back of the masjid, and I was not able to get a good look at him. Also, another thing that my Lord blessed me with that year I made the Islaamic Hajj was that I memorized much of the Qur'aan, such that I completed a month of memorizing and I had memorized close to eight (8) *ajzaa* (parts) of the Qur'aan in a month.

After returning to Egypt, I married and then moved to Yemen towards the end of the year 1399H (1979 CE), when news reached me that our Shaikh, Abu 'Abd-ir-Rahmaan (Muqbil Ibn Haadee) returned to his country of Yemen. So I traveled to him along with my wife, and I stayed with him for almost a complete year drinking from his fountain of knowledge, night and day. And I would

[4] Such as Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree, Saheeh Muslim and the Sunans of An-Nasaa'ee, At-Tirmidhee, Ibn Maajah and Abu Dawood.

not separate from him except when I had to sleep at night. This was the happiest year of my life, in which I accompanied the Shaikh for almost a complete year, seeking to study Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree under him. And he (Shaikh Muqbil) agreed to this, so this was the beginning of the class, which the Shaikh continued to teach after many years, even after my journey from Yemen to Egypt in 1405H (1985).

During this year, I would attend all of the Shaikh's classes - the class on *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* after Fajr, the class on *Jaami' At-Tirmidhee* in the forenoon, the class on *Sunan Abee Dawood* after Dhuhr, the class on *'Aqeedah At-Tahaawiyyah* with its explanation by Ibn Abee Al-'Izz and the explanation of *Qatr-un-Nadaa* of Ibn Hishaam from after 'Asr to just before Maghrib. Then there was a class on *Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree* between Maghrib and 'Ishaa, and a class on *Saheeh Muslim* after 'Ishaa. And apart form this, I would research hadeeth from the books of the Sunnah in the Shaikh's library in between these classes every time I got the chance to do so. And I would ask the Shaikh on what I found difficulty with concerning chains of narration, narrators and the ahaadeeth. After the year's end, some people from the neighboring towns, close to the area of the Shaikh, came requesting for one of his students to go and teach them and their children. The Shaikh selected me for this task, so I traveled to their town called Wadi Al-Kunaa, and I stayed with them for the length of five years, teaching and acquiring what knowledge of the Islamic sciences I could from my studies of the Books of the Sunnah and my research with them.

I returned to Egypt in 1405H (1985). During the time I had spent in Yemen, which was six years in total, I wrote a book about the Adhaan. I finished transcribing it into printable form when I reached Egypt and the book was printed in 1408H (1987). During this time, I was already back in Cairo, learning, teaching and spreading this blessed Salafee Da'wah as much as I was able to.

In Ramadaan of 1418H (1999), I made 'Umrah and during this time, I met Shaikh Rabee' Ibn Haadee Al-Madkhalee, may Allaah preserve him, in Madeenah. Also, my Lord blessed me by allowing me the ability to see Muhammad Ibn Saalih Al-'Uthaimeen in the Haram (Ka'bah) of Makkah, who was teaching a class on the second floor. Then, my Lord added to my blessing by allowing me to meet with Shaikh 'Abdul-'Azeez Ibn 'Abdillaah Ibn Baaz in his office in Makkah. This was a private meeting that was held on the evening of the 26th day of Ramadaan, after 'Asr to just before Maghrib. This was the first time that I saw the Shaikh and the last time, may Allaah have mercy on him. On this trip, I also met the noble brother, Shaikh 'Alee Ibn Hasan Al-Halabee for the first time, also in the Haram. And I also met the noble brother Dr. Baasim Ibn Faisal Al-Jawabirah and the noble brother, Dr. Khaalid Ibn 'Alee Al-'Anbaree.

Then Allaah enabled me to make another 'Umrah in the month of Rajab 1420 H, during which time I met many scholars and students of knowledge. Among them was Shaikh 'Abdul-Muhsin Ibn Hamd Al-'Abbaad Al-Badr, who I saw in his classes and I also visited him in his home in Madeenah. Also, there was the noble shaikh, Faalih Ibn Naafi' Al-Harbee and Shaikh Dr. Ibraaheem Ibn 'Aamir Ar-Ruhailee, who invited me for dinner with him, where I also met with Shaikh Dr. Saalih As-Suhaimee. During this journey, I also met with the noble brother 'Abdul-Malik Ibn Ahmad Ramadaanee Al-Jazaa'iree in Madeenah. Then in Makkah, I visited our Shaikh, Rabee' Ibn Haadee Al-Madkhalee and there I met Shaikh 'Umar Bazmool. I also attended the classes of Shaikh Saalih Al-'Abood and Shaikh Husain Aali Shaikh in the Prophet's Mosque.

And when in Makkah, I attended the classes on *Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree* given by Shaikh Wasiyyullaah 'Abaasee.

During my trips to the United States, I met Dr. Saalih Ibn Ghaanim As-Sadlaan, Shaikh Saleem Al-Hilaalee, and Shaikh Muhammad Musa Nasr.

From the people of knowledge whom I met in Egypt were Shaikh Muhammad 'Alee 'Abdur-Raheem, *rahimahullaah*, the previous president of Jamaa'at Ansaar As-Sunnah Al-Muhammadiyyah in Egypt, and also Shaikh Muhammad Ibn 'Abdil-Wahhaab Ibn Marzooq Al-Bannaa, may Allaah preserve him.

Allaah also blessed me to meet many people of knowledge and students of knowledge, other than those mentioned above and who carry the Da'wah in the east and the west, the amount of which I cannot account for due to their large number. And Allaah is sufficient for me and for them, and He alone is the One who guides to the Straight Path.

My Books:
The Book of Adhaan
Fasting and Its Rulings (which is the present book before you)
Guard your Covenants

Written by Abu Haatim Usaamah Ibn 'Abdil-Lateef Al-Qoosee at the beginning of Rabee'-ul-Awwal 1421H at the request of the brothers in charge of SSNA

INTRODUCTION

Verily, all praise is due to Allaah, we praise Him, we ask for His help and we seek His forgiveness. And we seek refuge in Allaah from the evils within ourselves and the evils of our actions. Whomsoever Allaah guides, there is no one that can lead him astray. And whomsoever is led astray, there is no one that can guide him. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allaah – He is alone and with no partner. And I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and His messenger.

To proceed: Fasting is one of the aspects of worship that is done entirely for Allaah, in which a Muslim responds to the rulings of his Lord – the One, the Only – by abstaining from food, drink and sexual intercourse with his wife during the day, believing that this abstaining is obedience to Allaah. So he renews his covenant with Allaah through this fast, confirming that the only reason for his existence in this life is to actualize complete servitude to the One who created him and all that exists – the One who says in His Book:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ ٱلْجِنَّ وَٱلْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾

"I have not created the Jinn and Mankind except that they should worship Me." [Surah Adh-Dhaariyaat: 56]

This is the absolute servitude with its complete and comprehensive understanding, which is displayed in the servant's responding to the Way of his Lord and the Laws of his Creator in every small and big matter from the affairs of his life, whether in knowledge (belief) or action (sayings and doings). Allaah says:

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِى وَنُسُكِى وَمَحْيَاىَ وَمَمَاتِى لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٦٢﴾
لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُۥ ۖ وَبِذَٰلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا۠ أَوَّلُ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٦٣﴾

"Say: 'Verily, my prayer, my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allaah, Lord of the worlds. He has no partner. And that was what I was commanded (with) and I am the first of the Muslims.'" [Surah Al-An'aam: 162-163]

This servitude – with the previously mentioned understanding – is seen at times in the prostration of the person praying, and at times it is seen in the hunger and thirst of the one fasting. It is seen at times in the supplication of a distressed person when he turns away from calling the people, towards calling Allaah. At other times, it is seen when the pilgrim, making Hajj, throws pebbles in one of the stations of (Hajj) and in a woman's covering of her body and adornment. And sometimes it is seen in the consummation of the marriage between a young Muslim male and

female, so that it could be a means for lowering their gazes and protecting their private parts. And at times it is seen in the Islamic punishment that is established by the ruler on a person that has committed adultery or theft. It is seen when someone removes an obstacle from the road or when a man who has money, which he is obligated to pay Zakaat on, gives his due Zakaat. It is seen at times when the wife obeys her husband and behaves well with him, and at times in the obedience and good treatment of a child to his parents. And sometimes it is seen in showing compassion and affection to an orphan, and at times it is seen in giving water to a thirsty dog, etc.

Indeed these things show the greatness of this Religion, which many, many people are ignorant about:

ذَٰلِكَ ٱلدِّينُ ٱلْقَيِّمُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

"This is the (true) straight Religion, but most men know not." [Surah Yusuf: 40]

With this understanding and from this description of greatness, I will extend my humble words on **Fasting and Its Rulings**, hoping that Allaah accepts it and that the Muslims answer to it (by acting on it) as well as benefit from it. And I ask Allaah that he rectify the condition of the Muslims by it and that He return them to the truth. Indeed Allaah has power over that and is able to do it. I put my trust in Him and to Him I repent.

THE OBLIGATION OF FASTING

In the name of Allaah, the most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Fasting is an obligation, which Allaah prescribed on every Muslim[5] that is sane and has reached the age of puberty. Allaah says:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى
ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٣﴾

"O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, in order that you may attain Taqwaa." [Surah Al-Baqarah: 183]

The specified time when it becomes obligatory is the month of Ramadaan of every year. Allaah says:

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ فِيهِ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَٰتٍ مِّنَ ٱلْهُدَىٰ
وَٱلْفُرْقَانِ ۚ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ ٱلشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۖ

"The month of Ramadaan in which was revealed the Qur'aan, a guidance for mankind and a clear proof for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong). So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramadaan), then he must observe the Fast (that month)." [Surah Al-Baqarah: 185]

Fasting in the month of Ramadaan is one of the pillars of Islaam. The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Islam is built on five things: (1) Testifying that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allaah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah, (2) Establishing the Prayer, (3) Giving the Zakaat, (4) Performing Hajj, and (5) Fasting in Ramadaan."** [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

So whoever breaks his fast intentionally in the month of Ramadaan without a valid Islamic excuse, he has destroyed one of the pillars of Islaam and stepped into the realm of great danger.

The person who is fasting abstains from food, drink and sexual intercourse with his wife – intending[6] worship by that – from dawn until sunset. So when the sun sets, all of these things become permissible for him.

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[5] The word "Muslim" includes both male and female.
[6] The place for the intention is the heart, so it should not be pronounced (on the tongue).

Allaah says:

أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ ٱلصِّيَامِ ٱلرَّفَثُ إِلَىٰ نِسَآئِكُمْ ۚ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ ۗ

"It is made lawful for you to have sexual relations with your wives on the night of Fasting. They are a covering for you and you are a covering for them." [Surah Al-Baqarah: 187]

And Allaah says in the same ayah:

وَكُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ ٱلْخَيْطُ ٱلْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ ٱلْخَيْطِ ٱلْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ ٱلْفَجْرِ ۖ

"And eat and drink until the white thread (light) of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread (darkness of night). Then complete your fast until the nightfall." [Surah Al-Baqarah: 187]

TAQWAA: THE WISDOM BEHIND FASTING

Taqwaa[7] is one of the greatest goals and most important reasons behind fasting. Allaah says:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُتِبَ عَلَيۡكُمُ ٱلصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِكُمۡ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَتَّقُونَ ١٨٣

"O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, in order that you may attain Taqwaa." [Surah Al-Baqarah: 183]

And the Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam,* said: **"Fasting is a shield."**[8] [Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree]

So fasting prevents a person from committing what Allaah hates, thus protecting him from Allaah's punishment. If the person that is fasting is able to prevent himself from what is generally permissible for him – such as food, drink and sexual relations with his wife – he will be more able and likely to prevent himself from those things generally forbidden for him, such as lying, backbiting, slandering, cursing, vain passing of time[9] and bad behavior. Therefore, the one who does not understand this matter will not achieve anything from his fasting, except hunger and thirst.

The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"If one of you is fasting, he should not use obscene language nor shout nor act ignorantly.**[10] **And if someone speaks abusively to him or wants to fight with him, he should say: 'I am fasting, I am fasting.'"** [Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree]

And the Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whoever does not abstain from false speech and acting upon that (false speech), Allaah is not in need of him leaving his food and his drink."** [Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree]

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[7] [**Editor's Note:** Taqwaa means to protect oneself from doing anything that Allaah hates or is not pleased with. It is to do what Allaah has commanded and to abstain from what Allaah has forbidden. So fasting builds Taqwaa since by fasting one abstains from the forbidden things and thus protects himself from sins and from gaining Allaah's anger – and this is Taqwaa.]

[8] The word used in this hadeeth ***"junnah"*** means: fortification, a shield and protection.

[9] From the prohibited types of vain passing of time is: Being obsessed with entertainment tools and musical instruments, such as the television and videos, which are used to watch what Allaah hates such as dancing, nudity, intermingling (between the sexes) and wickedness. And beware O Muslim of being deceived by something called religious films and network series (broadcasted over the TV and radio), for they are from the footsteps of the Devil, like poison in honey.

[10] Everything that Allaah and His Messenger have prohibited from vile manners, then that is from ignorance.

THE RULINGS OF FASTING

A sick person and a traveler[11] are allowed to break their fast in Ramadaan. They must make up the days that they missed (by fasting other days) at a later time, even if the days are not fasted consecutively. Allaah says:

وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ بِكُمُ ٱلْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ ٱلْعُسْرَ

"Whoever is ill or on a journey, then (he may break the fast and instead fast) the same number of days missed, on other days. Allaah wishes for you ease and He does not want to make things difficult for you." [Surah Al-Baqarah: 185]

Those who are not able to fast, such as the elderly man and elderly woman (past age of childbearing),[12] may break their fast and instead feed a needy person for every day that is missed. This is due to their falling under the saying of Allaah:

وَعَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُۥ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ

"And as for those who cannot fast (because of difficulty) they may feed a needy person (for each day missed)" based on the interpretation (of this ayah) found in authentic narrations of some of the Companions. As a matter of fact, this happened to one of the Companions, for Anas Ibn Maalik, *radyAllaah 'anhu*, reported that he was weak one year and could not fast. So he made a bowl of porridge and called thirty needy people and fed them." [Reported by Ad-Daraqutnee with an authentic chain of narration]

If a pregnant woman or a breast-feeding woman fears for herself or for her children, she may break her fast and instead feed a needy person for each day missed. This is based on her falling under the generality of the ruling found in the previous ayah. And according to the most correct opinion,[13] these two types of women do not have to make up for the missed days of fasting (i.e. by fasting other days).

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[11] No one is permitted to break the fast and make it up another day except these two, since Allaah did not mention a text for anyone besides them. **"And your Lord is not forgetful."** So the fatwa given by some contemporary (scholars) that it is permitted for school and college students to break their fast during examination times, and also for those people who have hard-labor occupations is not correct.

[12] And likewise the sick person that has a chronic disease – who is not able to fast with it, nor is it expected that he will be cured in the confines of the means that Allaah has enabled.

[13] This is the opinion of Ibn 'Abbaas and Ibn'Umar, *radyAllaahu 'anhumaa*. And it is not known that any of the other Companions opposed them in that. For a further discussion on this, refer to the book **"Fasting in Ramadaan"** of Shaikh Saleem Al-Hilaalee and 'Alee Hasan 'Alee Abdul Hameed Al-Halabee.

It is not permissible for a menstruating woman and a postpartum bleeding woman to observe the fast until they stop bleeding. So when they stop bleeding, they must make up for the days of fasting they missed. And they do not have to make up for the prayers they missed during that time,[14] as is authentically established in the Prophet's Sunnah, where he said: **"Is it not true that when a woman is menstruating, she neither prays nor fasts?"** [Part of a hadeeth reported by Al-Bukhaaree]

Anyone that eats or drinks out of forgetfulness is not obligated to make up for a missed day or to expiate. Rather, he must just complete his fasting (for that day). The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whoever forgets while he is fasting and eats or drinks, then let him complete his fast, for it was indeed Allaah who fed him and gave him to drink."** [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

The ruling for anyone that breaks the fast due to a mistake[15] or because he is forced to is the same ruling as that of the one who breaks his fast out of forgetfulness. This is based on the generality of the Prophet's, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, saying: **"Verily, Allaah has excused for my *ummah* (sins they commit due to) mistakes, forgetfulness and what they are forced to do."** [Reported by Ibn Maajah and others, and it is authentic due to all of its paths of narration]

Whoever eats or drinks intentionally during the day in Ramadaan without any valid excuse that allows him to do that has committed a sin and has nullified his fast. It is obligatory on him to repent from that great sin and to make up that missed day of fasting.

Anyone that has sexual intercourse with his wife during the day in Ramadaan, while they are both fasting, both of their fasts are broken. And it is obligatory for both of them or (perhaps) one of them to repent. And they must both make up that broken day of fasting and he must do the Expiation (*kaffaarah*). The Expiation is freeing a slave. If it is not possible to find a slave, then he must fast two consecutive months. If he is not able to do that, then he must feed sixty needy people, as is stated in the story of the man who had sexual intercourse with his wife during the day in Ramadaan. [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree]

And in some narrations of the hadeeth, other than that of Al-Bukhaaree's, there is a command to make up for the missed day of fasting. [Authenticated by Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajr in *Fath-ul-Baaree*]

There is no harm in a person tasting food with his tongue, while he is fasting, on the condition that nothing enters (his throat). This is since it is not truthful to say that a person who tastes food is in fact eating or drinking.

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[14] What some women do – such as intentionally leaving off food and drink during the condition of menses, then taking a sip of water before sunset – has no basis to it. Rather it is in opposition to the Sunnah.

[15] Such as the one who thinks it is still nighttime and thus eats. Then it becomes clear to him that the sun has risen, and that it is Fajr. Or like the one who hears the Aadhaan over the radio and thus breaks his fast, but finds out that it is an Adhaan from another country that has a different timing.

SOME THINGS A FASTING PERSON IS ALLOWED TO DO

The following things are allowable for a fasting person to do:

1. Taking a bath and pouring cold water over oneself, as well as gargling to cool and moisten the mouth and tongue.

2. *Hijaamah* (Cupping) and anything that resembles it,[16] so long as it doesn't lead to weakness, for then it would be disliked (*makrooh*). **"The Prophet,** *sall Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, **received *Hijaamah* while he was fasting."** [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree]

   As for the hadeeth: **"The person doing the *Hijaamah* and the one receiving the *Hijaamah* may break their fast"**, then it is abrogated, for that used to be in the beginning of Islaam.

3. Using the *Siwaak* (tooth-stick). This is based on the generality of the Prophet's, *sall Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, saying: **"If it were not that I would be putting my nation to hardship I would have ordered them to use the *Siwaak* along with every *wudoo*."** [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree]

   The person who is fasting is not exempted from this because the Siwaak is highly recommended at all times without exception – in Ramadaan and out of Ramadaan, before the sunrise and after it.

4. Delaying the bath (*ghusl*) that is necessary after sexual intercourse (from the previous night) until after Fajr starts: It is authentically reported that the time for Fajr would come in while the Prophet was in a state of *Janaabah* (sexual impurity) from his wives. So he, *sall Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, would bathe (perform *ghusl*) and fast." [Reported in Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

5. Kissing, embracing and fondling the wife, without having sexual intercourse. This is unless the man fears for himself that he will fall into the act of intercourse, for then he must avoid this. 'Aa'isha, *rady Allaah 'anhaa*, reported that: **"Allaah's Messenger,** *sall Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, **would kiss and embrace (his wives) while he was fasting. But he had more power to control his desires than any of you."** [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

6. Applicable medicines (such as creams or injections) that do not go to the stomach, **so long** as they do not serve the purpose of food and drink [17]

7. Using kohl (a black substance applied to the eyelids) and eye-drops

[16] Such as the opening of a vein, a blood transfusion and a blood discharge.

[17] Such as glucose and other nutritious injections that flow directly through the blood, for even though it does not go to the stomach, it still serves as food and drink. So fasting is not valid with it.

8. Swallowing one's saliva or its likes, which normally flow from the mouth or the nose to the throat. [18]

The person who is fasting must beware of going too deep when inhaling water (up the nose or mouth) during *wudoo*, based on the saying of the Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*: **"Go deep when inhaling water (during *wudoo*) unless you are fasting."** [Reported by the collectors of the Sunan with an authentic chain of narration]

[18] Such as mucus or the dust that floats in the atmosphere, as well as all that one is not able to repel from inhaling, since Allaah will not hold a person accountable for something that he has no control over.

RECOMMENDED ACTS OF FASTING

The pre-dawn meal (*suhoor*) is highly recommended for those who fast. And delaying it until just before Fajr is more rewarding and more blessed. The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Have *suhoor* for verily there is blessing in the *suhoor*."** [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

Anas, *radyAllaah 'anhu*, reported on Zaid Ibn Thaabit, *radyAllaah 'anhu*, that he said: "We had *suhoor* with the Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, then he stood up for the prayer." I (Anas) said: "How much time was there between the Adhaan and the *suhoor*?" He said: "The length of time it takes to recite fifty ayaat." [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree]

It is recommended for those fasting to hasten in breaking the fast as soon as the sun sets. The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"The people will not cease to be upon good so long as they hasten in breaking the fast."**[19] And he, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"When the night comes from here and the day leaves from here, and the sun sets, the fasting person must break his fast."** [Both of these hadeeths are reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

It is recommended to break the fast before praying, with fresh dates, but if not, then with dry dates, and if not, then with water. **"The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, used to break the fast before praying with fresh dates. But if there were no fresh dates, he used to break it with dry dates. And if there were no dry dates, he would take sips of water."** [Reported by At-Tirmidhee with a sound chain of narration]

It is recommended for the person fasting to spend time in reciting and studying the Qur'aan, and in sitting with the people of righteousness and knowledge, as well as increasing in giving away charity for good causes during Ramadaan. **"The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, was the most generous amongst people. And the time when he was the most generous was in the month of Ramadaan when Jibreel would meet him. Jibreel used to meet him every night during Ramadaan until it ended, in which the Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, would present him with the Qur'aan. When Jibreel used to meet him, he, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, was more generous with good than the fair wind."** [Reported Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

[19] From this, you can see the falsehood that the Shi'ah in Iran and other lands are upon, from their delaying of breaking the fast until the appearance of some stars. So there is a testimony in this hadeeth that these people are not upon good. Therefore my Muslim brother: Hold on to the Sunnah and do not be deceived by them!

THE LAST TEN NIGHTS OF RAMADAAN

The Night Prayer [20] in Ramadaan is a cause for attaining the forgiveness of sins. The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whoever stands (in night prayer) during Ramadaan with faith and seeking reward (from Allaah), all of his previous sins will be forgiven."** [Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

'Aa'isha, *radyAllaah 'anhaa*, clarified the number of *rak'aat* for the Night Prayer, as the Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, used to pray it. **"The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, did not exceed eleven (11) *rak'aat* in Ramadaan or out of it."** [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim] [21]

"When the last ten days of Ramadaan would come, the Prophet, would tighten his waist-wrapper (*izaar*), spend the night in worship, and wake his family." [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

And **"Allaah's Messenger, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, would exert himself in the last ten days (of Ramadaan) more than he would at other times."** [Reported by Muslim]

And **"The Messenger of Allaah, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, would perform '*Itikaaf* (seclusion in the masjid) during the last ten days of Ramadaan."** [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

"When the Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, wanted to perform *'Itikaaf*, he would pray Fajr (in the masjid) and then begin his '*Itikaaf*." [22] [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

One of the most important reasons why the last ten nights are so honorable is because Laylat-ul-Qadr (The Night of Decree) falls in it. Allaah says:

لَيۡلَةُ ٱلۡقَدۡرِ خَيۡرٞ مِّنۡ أَلۡفِ شَهۡرٖ

"Laylat-ul-Qadr is better than a thousand months." [Surah Al-Qadr: 3]

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[20] Commonly known as *Salaat-ut-Taraweeh*

[21] The report that the Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, prayed twenty *rak'aat* is not authentic, nor the report that 'Umar, *radyAllaahu anhu*, did it.

[22] Based on this, the start of *'Itikaaf* should begin on the morning of the twentieth day, immediately after Salaat-ul-Fajr. This is because Al-Bukhaaree reported a hadeeth that indicates that one should leave *'Itikaaf* in the morning also – meaning the morning of the thirtieth day. And he (Al-Bukhaaree) named this chapter: "The one who leaves his *'Itikaaf* during the morning."

And He says:

إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَـٰهُ فِى لَيْلَةٍ مُّبَـٰرَكَةٍ

"Indeed, We revealed it (this Qur'aan) on a blessed night." [Surah Ad-Dukhaan: 3]

The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whoever stands in night prayer during Laylat-ul-Qadr with faith and seeking reward (from Allaah), his past sins will be forgiven."** [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim] And he, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"On the morning following Laylat-ul-Qadr, the sun rises not having any rays."** [23] [Reported by Muslim]

This was the sign one of the Companions[24] used to determine that Laylat-ul-Qadr was the twenty-seventh night of Ramadaan and Allaah knows best.

[23] It appears round like the moon.
[24] He is Ubay Bin Ka'ab, *radyAllaahu 'anhu.*

THE 'EED PRAYER AND ZAKAAT-UL-FITR

About Sadaqat-ul-Fitr, Ibn 'Umar, *rady Allaah 'anhumaa*, reported that **"Allaah's Messenger, *sall Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, made it obligatory to give Zakaat-ul-Fitr as a *saa'* [25] of dates or a *saa'* of barley, upon the slave and the free person, the male and the female, and the young and the old amongst the Muslims. And he, *sall Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, commanded that it be given before the people set out for the prayer."** [26] [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

The Sunnah is that it should be given in food, as was done during the time of the Prophet. Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudree, *rady Allaah 'anhu*, said: "During the time of the Prophet, *sall Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, we used to give a *saa'* of food [27] on the day of the 'Eed."

Then he (Abu Sa'eed) said: "Our food used to be: barley, raisins, dried curds[28] and dates." [Reported by Al-Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

About the 'Eid Prayer, Allaah says:

وَلِتُكۡمِلُواْ ٱلۡعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُواْ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَىٰكُمۡ وَلَعَلَّكُمۡ تَشۡكُرُونَ

"And so that you may complete the (prescribed) time (for fasting) and so that you may glorify Allaah (by saying Allaahu Akbar), for having guided you, so that you may be grateful." [Surah Al-Baqarah: 185]

So the Muslims go out to the *musallaa* (place of prayer) – an empty land – saying the *takbeer* (Allaahu Akbar).[29] Then they pray two *rak'aat* behind the Imaam, saying the *takbeer* (Allaahu

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[25] A *saa'* consists of four *amdaad* (plural for *mudd*). A *mudd* is a handful using two hands cupped together of an average-sized man. It is better for you to measure the weight of the *saa'* that you will take to distribute for Zakaat-ul-Fitr by yourself. This is to be done by scooping four handfuls with both hands and then weighing it. It is approximately around two kilograms from the allotted portion give or take a little. But giving a little more out of precaution is better.

[26] He means by this the 'Eed Prayer. However, it is permissible to entrust it with the committee that is in charge of distributing the Zakaat, a day or two before the Day of 'Eed.

[27] It is the Sunnah to give any food that the people of that land grow. Its range is that a *saa'* is to be given by every individual in the family. A majority of the scholars hold that it is not permissible to give it in the form of its monetary worth in cash, but rather it must be given in food as is stated in the Sunnah. This is the opinion that is in conformity with the evidences, so adhere to it! And beware of views and opinions, even if people beautify them. This does not mean that we cannot give charity in cash to the poor, for we can – except for Sadaqat-ul-Fitr, for this is a matter of worship. And there is wisdom in Allaah's commands, which our limited minds cannot comprehend.

[28] This is evaporated milk, which is well known in the Hijaaz area and Najd, and which resembles *kishk* in our land (of Egypt)

[29] The most correct manner of saying the *takbeer* is: ***"Allaahu Akbar, Allaahu Akbar, Allaahu Akbar Kabeeran."***

Akbar) seven times in the first *rak'ah*, and five times in the second *rak'ah*, reciting the Qur'aan out loud in both *rak'aat*. Then the Imaam gives one *khutbah* (sermon) after which the people disperse. And it is from the Sunnah to return home using a different route than the one taken when coming to the *musallaa* (place of prayer).[30]

It is recommended for the one who fasts the month of Ramadaan to (also) fast six days in (the month of) Shawaal. The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whoever fasts the month of Ramadaan and follows it up with six days in Shawaal, it is as if he has fasted the whole year."** [Reported by Muslim] It is not a condition that the days be fasted consecutively.

Some Important Notes:

There is nothing authentically reported concerning fasting on the first day of (the month of) Rajab or the twenty-seventh day of Rajab.

There is nothing authentically reported concerning fasting in the middle of Sha'baan.

Also, the *ahaadeeth* reported on the excellence of fasting in the sacred months are weak, except for the month of Muharram, for there is an authentic hadeeth about it. Look for it in the last section of this book.

From the great wrongs committed in Ramadaan is that many people fast in Ramadaan, but do not pray. Their example is like that of a people who build a palace but destroy its surroundings.

From the great wrongs also is that: Some people observe the prayer in Ramadaan, but then leave off praying after the month comes to an end. So it is as if the Lord of Ramadaan is not the Lord of Shawaal or any of the other months. May Allaah be far removed from false gods and partners.

[30] It is legislated on this day for the women to go out so that they may witness the 'Eed Prayer, even the menstruating women. However, they (the menstruating women) must stay away from the *musallaa* (place of prayer) and witness the (acts of) good and the invitation of the Muslims.

SOME AUTHENTIC AHAADEETH ABOUT FASTING

Some authentic *ahaadeeth* on the virtue of fasting in Ramadaan and other times:

Allaah says: **"Every good deed of the son of Adam is for him except fasting, for it is for Me and I will reward it."** [A *qudsee* hadeeth reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"By the One in whose Hand the soul of Muhammad r is, the breath that comes out of the mouth of the one fasting is better to Allaah than the scent of musk. There are two times of joy for the person who fasts: When he breaks his fast, he is happy because he broke his fast, and when he meets his Lord, he is happy because of his fast."** [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

The Prophet said: **"Indeed there is a door in Paradise called *Ar-Rayyaan.* On the Day of Judgement, those who fast will enter through it, and no one else besides them will enter in through it. It will be said: 'Where are those who fasted?' So they will stand up. No one else will enter in through it besides them. So when they have entered it, it will close and no one else will enter in through it after them."** [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"When the month of Ramadaan comes in, the doors of Paradise are opened and the doors of the Hellfire are closed and the devils are chained."** [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Whoever fasts Ramadaan with faith and seeking reward, he will have his previous sins forgiven."** [Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, was asked about fasting on the Day of 'Arafah, so he said: **"Doing that expiates sins committed in the past year and the following year."** And he was asked about fasting on the day of 'Ashoora, so he, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"It expiates sins committed in the previous year."** [Reported by Muslim]

The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"The five daily prayers; one Friday prayer to the next Friday prayer; and (fasting) Ramadaan to the next Ramadaan expiate the sins that occur in between them, so long as the major sins are avoided."** [Reported by Muslim]

The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"There is not a servant (of Allaah) that fasts a day in the way of Allaah, except that Allaah removes his face from the fire by the distance of seventy years because of that."** [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"The most excellent (month for) fasting after Ramadaan is Allaah's month of Muharram. And the most excellent prayer after the obligatory prayer is the night prayer (i.e. *Tahajjud*)."** [Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Making 'Umrah in Ramadaan is equal to making Hajj – or making Hajj with me."** [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, did not observe fasting in any month more than in the month of Sha'baan. [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Fasting three days**[31] **in every month is like fasting the whole year."** [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

"The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, used to aspire to fast on Monday and Thursday." [Reported by At-Tirmidhee with an authentic chain]

The Prophet said: **"The most beloved fast to Allaah is the fast of (Prophet) Dawood – he would fast one day and not fast the next day."** [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

When the Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, came to Madeenah, he found the Jews fasting on the day of 'Ashoora, so he asked them: **"What is this day, which you are fasting?"** They replied: "This is a great day – the day in which Allaah rescued Moses and his people (from their enemy), and in which Pharaoh and his people were drowned. So Moses fasted on this day out of gratefulness, so we fast on it (also). The Prophet said: **"We have more right and claim to Moses than you."** So the Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, fasted that day and he ordered (the Muslims) to fast (on that day also). [Reported by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

'Aa'isha, *radyAllaah 'anhaa*, reported: **"I said: 'O Messenger of Allaah! What if I knew which night Laylat-ul-Qadr was, what should I say in it?' He, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: 'Say: O Allaah, You are All-Pardoning, and You love to forgive, so forgive me.'"** (***Allaahhumma innaka 'affuwwun tuhibbul 'afwa fa 'afu 'annee***)." [Reported by At-Tirmithee and others with an authentic chain]

The Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Fasting, prayer, giving charity and enjoining good and forbidding evil absolve the trials a man faces with his family, his money, his children and his neighbor."** [Reported by Muslim]

The Prophet said: **"O young men! Whoever amongst you can afford it, then let him get married. For it is the best means for lowering the gaze (from looking at women), and it is the best means of keeping the private parts chaste (from fornication). But whoever is not able (to marry), then let him observe fasting, for it is a protection."** [32]

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[31] In some *ahaadeeth*, these days are interpreted as being the **"white days"**, and they are the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth day in every month. They are called **"white days"** because their nights are lighted by the moon at the time of its completed stage (i.e. when there is a full moon). From this, we can realize the mistake of the general people in their applying the term "white" to the six recommended days of fasting in Shawaal.

[32] There is an indication in this hadeeth of the forbiddance of masturbating with the hand (a common practice done in secret). This is since if it were allowed the Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, would

SOME WEAK AHAADEETH ABOUT FASTING

Some weak *ahaadeeth* that are often quoted, which are related to fasting in Ramadaan and other times: This is in order to warn against them and to caution the Muslims from attributing them to the Prophet, *sall Allaahu 'alayhi wa sallam.*[33]

"The first part of Ramadaan is mercy, the middle part (of it) is forgiveness and the last part is freedom from the Hellfire." [Very Weak]

"Fast and you will be healthy." [Weak]

"Fasting on the first of Rajab expiates (the sins committed) for three years and (fasting on) the second day expiates (the sins committed) for two years. And the third (day) expiates (the sins committed) for a year. Then every (remaining) day is (an expiation of sins in) a month." [Weak]

"The month of Ramadaan is suspended between the heavens and earth – it is not raised up to Allaah until the Zakaat-ul-Fitr is given." [Weak]

"The month of Ramadaan is the month of Allaah, and the month of Sha'baan is my month and Ramadaan is an expiation (for sins)." [Very Weak]

"When the first night of Ramadaan comes, Allaah looks at His creation. And if Allaah looks at a servant of His, He will never punish him. And every night Allaah frees one million people from the Hellfire." [Fabricated]

"O people! A very great and blessed month has come upon you. It is a month in which there is a night that is better than a thousand months. Allaah has made it an obligation to fast in it, and recommended us to observe the night prayer in it. Whoever seeks nearness to Allaah by doing a good deed in it, it will be like one performing an obligatory action in other months. And whoever performs an obligatory action in it, it is as if he has performed seventy obligatory actions in other months. It is a month of patience – and the reward for patience is Paradise – and a month of comfort, and a month in which the believer's provision (i.e. wealth) is increased. Whoever feeds a person fasting in this month will have his sins forgiven and free his neck from the Hellfire. And he will have the same reward as the person who is fasting without subtracting anything from his reward. Allaah gives this reward to the one who feeds a fasting person with (even) a sip of milk or a date or a cup of water. And whoever quenches the thirst of the fasting person, Allaah will let him drink a serving from my Hawd (Fountain), from which he will not feel thirst again until he enters

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have advised the young men who are not able to get married to do it. And it is not permissible to put off clarifying a matter at the time when a clarification is required, as is well known. What further confirms its prohibition is the generality of Allaah's saying: **"But whoever seeks beyond that (marriage and what the right hands possess), then those are the transgressors."** [Surah Al-Mu'minoon: 7]

[33] The grading on these *ahaadeeth* are taken from Shaikh Al-Albaanee, quoted from his two books "*Da'eef Al-Jaami'*" and "*Silsilat-ul Ahaadeeth Ad-Da'eefah wal-Mawdoo'ah*."

Paradise. And it is a month in which the first part of it is mercy, the middle part is forgiveness and the last part is freedom from the Hellfire. And whoever lessens the burden on his servant in it (Ramadaan), Allaah will forgive him his sins and free him from the Hellfire." [Rejected]

"Fasting is half of patience. And there is a Zakaat that is binding on every thing, so the Zakaat of the body is fasting." [Weak]

"Whoever breaks his fast in Ramadaan without a valid excuse that Allaah has allowed for him, it will not be recorded on him that he fasted a whole year, even if he fasts it." [Weak]

FATWA ON DETERMINING THE BEGINNING OF RAMADAAN

In order to complete the benefits of this treatise and considering what we are being tested by in Egypt and other lands, from the occurrence of division at the start and end of fasting every year, we will present this following section. So you can find that in one family, the members are divided amongst themselves between those who are fasting and those who are not, each of them claiming that they are following a specific Fiqh opinion. But yet they forget or they are caused to forget that Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah are the strictest of people in unifying the ranks. So this differing in Fiqh amongst them should never result in their dividing in this manner. Rather, they must follow the large body of Muslims, amongst whom they live – whether they are fasting or not fasting – even if the majority of the people oppose them in the understanding of a Fiqh issue. This is one of the principles of Ahlus-Sunnah, which is neglected by many people who attribute themselves to knowledge, not to mention the regular common people. This is because Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah consider differing to be a great evil.

Look at the example of 'Abdullaah Ibn Mas'ood, *radyAllaahu 'anhu*. This man prayed four *rak'aat* behind 'Uthmaan, *radyAllaahu 'anhu*, in Minaa, even though he knew full well that the Prophet, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, only prayed two *rak'aat* in Minaa – the two *rak'aat* of the shortened prayer. And he said about his praying behind 'Uthmaan: "I hope that my portion of the four *rak'aat* will be recorded as (instead) two *rak'aat* that are accepted (by Allaah)." So it was said to him: "Why did you not pray alone" meaning "why did you not shorten your prayer in accordance with the Sunnah?" So he said to them: "Differing is evil."

And look at Shaikh-ul-Islaam Ibn Taimiyyah who gave a fatwa (religious ruling) that whoever sees the crescent with his own eyes must follow the *Jamaa'ah* (large group or community) he lives with in what they decide – whether fasting or not – in order to unify the ranks and prevent division. He used as evidence the hadeeth of the Prophet: **"Fasting is on the day that you (people) fast, and the end of fasting is on the day that you (people) break the fast. And your Adhaa is on the day that you (people) offer your sacrifices"** and the hadeeth: **"The end of fasting is the day in which the people break the fast. And the day of Adhaa is the day in which the people slaughter (their sacrifices)."**

The word *hilaal* (crescent) is defined as a noun for something that is introduced, meaning it is proclaimed and announced out loud. And the word *shahr* (month) is defined as something that is made known. So if it is sighted, yet not made known, the month has not begun. And there is no distinguishing in this matter between the status of the one who is put in charge of sighting the moon – whether he is correct or erroneous, whether he tried hard or was lazy. So the responsibility is on him and if he errs (in the sighting), then the error is on him only.

Refer to his valuable fatwa in his *Majmoo' Al-Fatawaa*. [Vol. 25, Pg. 202-206]

Since many people who go against this issue depend on the sighting of Saudi Arabia most of the time, I will present to them the following fatwa in order that they may know that the very own scholars of Saudi Arabia have ruled in opposition to what they adhere to. Before you is the text:

A fatwa (religious ruling) from the Permanent Committee of Scientific Research and Rulings [Number 1657 in the year 8/29/1397]

Question: There always occurs a problem at the beginning of the month of Ramadaan with the Muslim students in the United States and Canada which results in the division of the Muslims into three groups:

1. One group fasts when the new moon is sighted in the country in which they live.

2. Another group fasts when fasting starts in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

3. And a third group begins fasting when they hear news from the Muslim Student's Union in the United States and Canada, which watches for the new moon in different parts of America, and as soon as the new moon is sighted in one city, they spread the news to different Islamic centers so that the Muslims in America can start fasting on the same day despite the great distances that exist between the different cities.

Which group is the best to follow and to begin fasting with when the sighting and news is made?

Answer: The answer will be given in three points:

Firstly: Variations in the rising points of the moon (i.e. it appears at different times in different places) is something that is well known, whether through observation or by intellect. None of the scholars differ in this regard. However, differing amongst the Muslim scholars occurs over whether this variation in rising points should be considered or not.

Secondly: The issue of whether these variations in rising points should be taken into consideration or not is from the speculative issues in which there is room for Ijtihaad. Differing in this regard is permissible for those who are competent in science and religion. This is from the differing that is permissible; in which the one who has the correct opinion will have two rewards – one reward for his Ijtihaad, and one for being correct – while the one whose opinion is wrong will have one reward – just for his Ijtihaad.

The scholars have differed on this issue resulting in two opinions. So from them are those scholars who held that the variation in the rising points of the moon was of significance, and other scholars who held that it was not significant. Both groups use evidence from the Qur'aan and Sunnah to support their opinions. And perhaps they both use the same text as evidence, such as their both sharing in the use of the following ayah as evidence:

يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلْأَهِلَّةِ ۖ قُلْ هِىَ مَوَٰقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَٱلْحَجِّ ۗ

"They ask you (O Muhammad) about the new moons. Say: These are signs to mark fixed periods of time for mankind and for the pilgrimage." [Surah Al-Baqarah: 189] and the

hadeeth: **"Fast when you (people) sight it (the new moon) and stop fasting when you (people) sight it."**

The reason both groups use this (same) evidence is due to the difference in their understanding of the text, as well as the approach each group takes in their using it as a proof.

In view of the considerations that the (fatwa) body has regarded and measured, and taking into consideration that differing in this issue does not have effects from which we fear bad consequences – since fourteen centuries have passed since the advent of Islaam, in which there was not known that the entire Muslim ummah united upon one moon sighting, the members of this committee of senior scholars hold that:

One should leave things the way they are and not cause provocation and irritation to this issue. And we hold that each Muslim state has the right to choose what it sees fit – through the guidance of its scholars – from the two opinions, which have been mentioned for this issue, since each of them has its proofs and evidences.

Thirdly: The committee has looked at the issue of confirming the new moon through calculations, and what the Qur'aan and Sunnah say about this, and they have studied the opinions of the scholars on this matter. So they decided unanimously that astronomical calculations **cannot** be used to confirm new moons in religious issues. This is based on the Prophet's, *sallAllaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, saying: **"Fast when you (people) sight it (the new moon) and stop fasting when you (people) sight it"** and also his saying: **"Do not begin fasting until you sight it (new moon) and do not stop fasting until you sight it."**

The Permanent Committee on Scientific Research and Rulings holds that: the Muslim Student's Union (or any other group representing the Muslim community) in countries where the government is not Islamic should take the place of the Islamic government with regard to the matter of confirming the new moon for the people living in those non-Islamic countries.

On the basis of what was stated in the second point, which was decided upon by the Committee, this union has the right to choose which of the two opinions they want to take – either to consider the variations in the times of moonrise or to not consider that. Then they should inform all the Muslims in their country what opinion they take, and they (the Muslims) must follow what opinion they hold and what they announce to the public, so as to unite the Muslims in their fasting and to put an end to disputes and confusion. Everyone who lives in those lands should try to sight the moon in the areas in which they reside. So if one or more trustworthy people sight the moon, they should fast according to that and tell the union to spread the news. This is for the beginning of Ramadaan.

As for the end of the month, there must be a confirmation from two reliable witnesses for the sighting of the new moon for Shawaal, or thirty days of Ramadaan must be completed. This is based on the Prophet's saying:

“Fast when you (people) sight it (the new moon) and stop fasting when you (people) sight it. But if it is hidden from you (by clouds or fog), then complete the number of thirty days (for Sha’baan).”

May Allaah send His peace and blessings on our Prophet, Muhammad, his family and his Companions.

The Permanent Committee of Scientific Research and Rulings

‘Abdullaah Ibn Qu’ood – Member
‘Abdullaah Ibn Ghudayyaan – Member
‘Abd-ur-Razzaaq’Afeefee – Assistant Head of the Committee
‘Abd-ul-‘Azeez Ibn ‘Abdillaah Ibn Baaz –Head of the Committee

This is the last of what Allaah enabled us to compile on the subject of **“Fasting and Its Rulings”** and all praise is for Allaah, Lord of the worlds.